



healthy

# THAI COOKING

jules clancy

For Dad, learning to stir fry at age 72!  
with love xx

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# INTRODUCTION

The first overseas trip I ever took was a 3 week holiday to Bangkok and the beaches of Thailand. I was instantly captivated by the warm, smiling people but the thing that really won my heart, of course, was the food.

I had eaten plenty of Thai in Australia and was already a fan of the cuisine. But eating Thai in Thailand gave me a much deeper appreciation.

Over the years I've gone through many Thai cooking phases but it's been a while since I really got into cooking Thai.

Which is a shame.

So when you guys voted for the May class at the Stonesoup Virtual Cookery School to focus on Healthy Thai Cooking, I was super excited for an excuse to get back into Thai.

I really hope this masterclass inspires you to embrace healthy Thai cooking too!

Enjoy!  
Jules x



VIDEO

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# HOW TO SEASON THE THAI WAY

The brilliance of Thai cooking lies in their dedication to the pursuit of 'balance' and 'harmony'.

While seasoning in Western cooking is generally confined to adding a little salt and pepper, the Thais focus on 4 main flavour areas: Sweet, Salty, Sour and Hot.

It may sound complicated, but most recipes have already taken the 4 flavours into account. All you need to do is a little 'fine tuning'.

## `the importance of tasting`

Regardless of what type of food you are preparing, the number 1 thing you can do to improve your seasoning is to taste as you go.

The simple act of tasting and asking yourself the question 'is this in balance?' is all it takes to become a seasoning pro.

the thai seasoning arsenal

## `common ingredients used to season Thai food`

### **hot**

red chilli, green chilli, peppercorns

### **sour**

lime juice, tamarind

note: lemon juice or rice vinegar aren't traditional but can work if you're out of lime,

### **sweet**

palm sugar or brown sugar

### **salty**

fish sauce

note: although not traditional, regular sea salt or soy sauce can be substituted for those wanting to avoid fish sauce.

# HOW TO SEASON THE THAI WAY

[CONTINUED]

a thai seasoning problem solving guide

The good news is, most problems can be fixed. Here are some tips to help when your Thai food is out of whack in the 'balance & harmony' department...

## **too hot**

Add some sugar

## **too sour?**

Add some salt, sugar and/or chilli

## **too salty?**

Try a little lime juice and/ or sugar

## **too sweet?**

Add a little salt (fish sauce) or lime juice

the rice factor

Thai food is commonly eaten with rice which has the effect of 'diluting' the flavours of your dish. To avoid having your flavours lost when rice is added to the equation, make sure you are generous with your seasoning.

like to learn more about seasoning?

Then head over to Module 6 of Solve Your Dinner Dilemma:  
:: [Mastering the Art of Seasoning]

# 7 TIPS TO COOKING THAI LIKE A NATIVE

The first time I ever left Australia was a trip to Thailand. I can't begin to describe how excited I was to emerge from the flight into a wall of humid Bangkok air.

I was in the Northern Hemisphere. In Asia! Wow!

It was only 7 o'clock in the morning when we left our newly found hotel and headed towards the Royal Palace. I couldn't believe how few people there were. I was expecting a bustling city with food hawkers everywhere. Instead I got a serene calm – not a food seller to be found.

Eventually we came across a lone vendor peddling some sort of noodle soup from his cart. Without really thinking we ordered and stood near the palace, slurping hot noodles for breakfast in the early morning calm.

Welcome to Thailand.

Over the years I've returned to Thailand many a time – as much for the food as for the people and the beaches. But it wasn't until I started working in my last job that I got to make friends with a real Thai native. Working with Jan was always a joy. Her big smile and passion for food are as infectious as her famous chocolate cake.

So it made sense that when I wanted to perfect my Thai home cooking, that I'd persuade Jan to share some of her Thai cooking tips. Here they are...

## 1. Smile

If there's one thing I've learned from my time in Thailand and from working with Jan – Thai people have to be up there as the most smiley in the world. I secretly think that even when Jan is on her own she is smiling – and I have to say she is one of the calmest cooks I know. So before you start cooking make sure you smile and again before you serve your guests – you'll be amazed what a difference it makes.

# 7 TIPS TO COOKING THAI LIKE A NATIVE

[CONTINUED]

## 2. Learn to cook by taste

Thai people are brilliant adapters and rarely follow recipes. Fish sauces vary in saltiness and chillies are notoriously unpredictable so have the courage to trust your instincts, use the recipe as a guideline but not a bible and taste as you go.

## 3. Practice the art of balancing

The Thais are the masters of finding balance and harmony with their seasoning. If something tastes too salty, add a little sugar. Or if it is too sweet, add a little more saltiness with fish sauce or some soy. Use lime juice to balance if the dish tastes a little flat and needs some zing.

The other thing to consider is heat – sugar can mask a little if the chilli is too intense but only a little – so it's always wise to add your chilli gradually. If you're serving people who have a variety of chilli sensitivities it's best to err on the mild side and serve some fresh or dried chilli at the table to allow your guests to balance the heat to their individual taste.

## 4. Remove time pressures

There's no real reason to eat at a certain time. The meal is ready when it's done. Take the Thai approach and you'll find you enjoy the cooking process a lot more.

## 5. Eat with a fork and spoon

That's right – the traditional way to eat Thai is with a fork and a spoon. For newcomers to Asian food, Thai is a great place to start for it's fresh fragrant flavour and the fact that they don't use chopsticks.

# 7 TIPS TO COOKING THAI LIKE A NATIVE

[CONTINUED]

## 6. Cook a variety of dishes & share

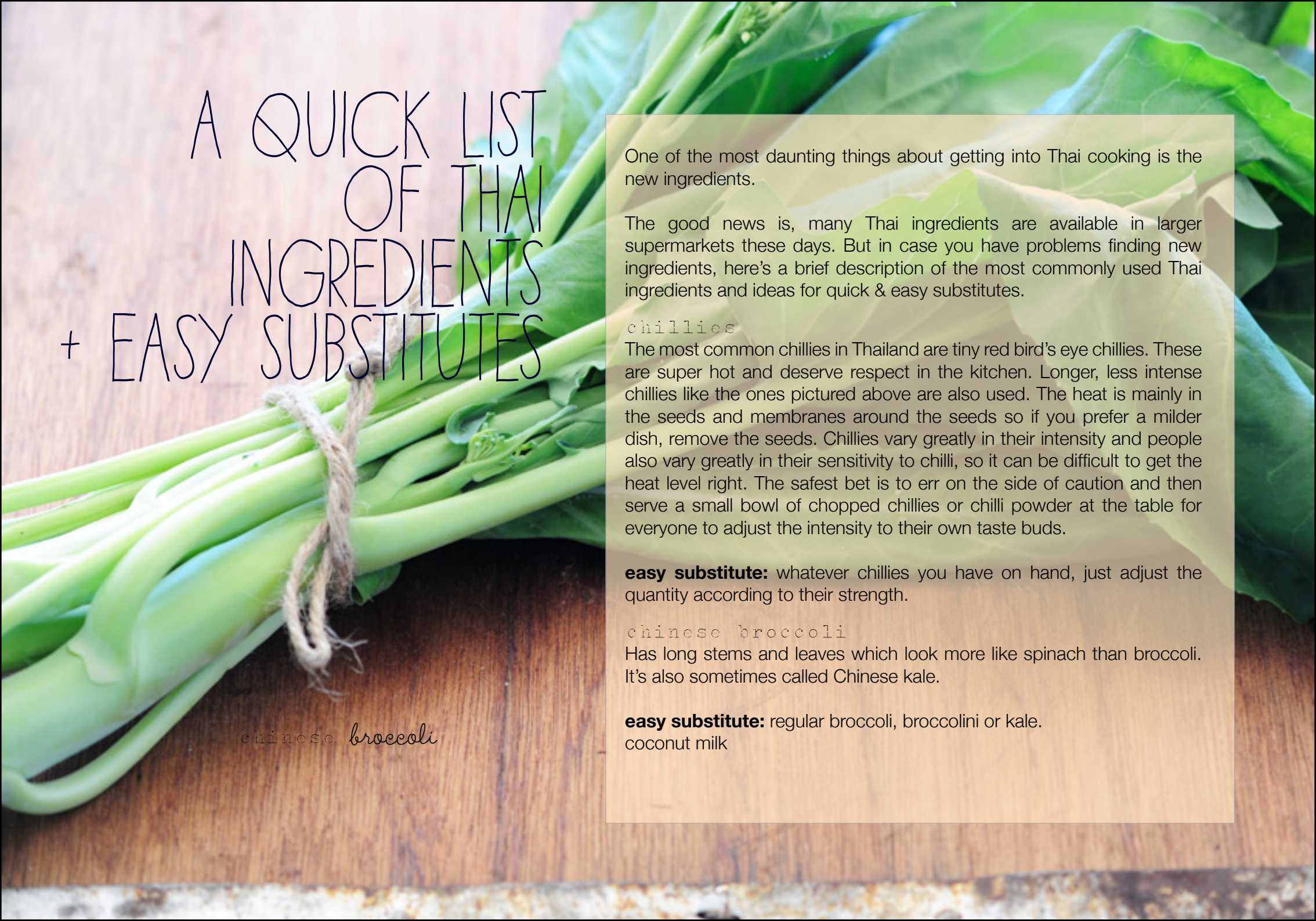
The Thai's really take the whole 'variety is the spice of life' concept to the extreme. Typical Thai meals will involve a few different dishes as well as the ubiquitous steamed jasmine rice.

Everything is served 'family style' in the middle of the table so each diner can help themselves. A good place to start is serving one curry, one stir fry and one other dish as well as rice. But the meal can really contain as many dishes as you're prepared to make.

## 7. Or keep it simple.

I think one of the main reasons I don't think to cook Thai as often as I'd like is that I tend to associate a Thai meal with multiple different dishes as described above.

But in reality, there's no need to go the 'full Thai' every time. Try big bowl of laksa or just make one stir fry including plenty of veg and serve with rice or cauliflower rice. And keep the multi-course shared meals for the weekends.



# A QUICK LIST OF THAI INGREDIENTS + EASY SUBSTITUTES

chinese broccoli

One of the most daunting things about getting into Thai cooking is the new ingredients.

The good news is, many Thai ingredients are available in larger supermarkets these days. But in case you have problems finding new ingredients, here's a brief description of the most commonly used Thai ingredients and ideas for quick & easy substitutes.

## chillies

The most common chillies in Thailand are tiny red bird's eye chillies. These are super hot and deserve respect in the kitchen. Longer, less intense chillies like the ones pictured above are also used. The heat is mainly in the seeds and membranes around the seeds so if you prefer a milder dish, remove the seeds. Chillies vary greatly in their intensity and people also vary greatly in their sensitivity to chilli, so it can be difficult to get the heat level right. The safest bet is to err on the side of caution and then serve a small bowl of chopped chillies or chilli powder at the table for everyone to adjust the intensity to their own taste buds.

**easy substitute:** whatever chillies you have on hand, just adjust the quantity according to their strength.

## chinese broccoli

Has long stems and leaves which look more like spinach than broccoli. It's also sometimes called Chinese kale.

**easy substitute:** regular broccoli, broccolini or kale.  
coconut milk



# A QUICK LIST OF THAI INGREDIENTS + EASY SUBSTITUTES

[CONTINUED]

coriander (cilantro)

## coconut milk

Made by combining the flesh of fresh coconuts with water. Make sure you're using unsweetened coconut milk or cream. The main difference between the two is just the amount of water added (coconut milk has more water) so if you're keen to save money, buy coconut cream and dilute it yourself. Thai cookbooks will tell you that fresh coconut milk has a much better flavour than canned or coconut milk powder. But trust me, it's not worth the hassle of wrestling with a coconut. Canned is fine. Coconut milk powder is OK but tends to go lumpy so I prefer cans.

**easy substitute:** There really isn't a good substitute for the real thing. You can use regular cream instead but you'll be missing out on loads of lovely flavour.

## coriander (cilantro)

People tend to either love or hate this strongly fragrant herb. The Thais are definitely in the former camp and use the whole plant, leaves, stems and roots. The roots tend to be used in curry pastes while the leaves and stems are added at the end for freshness and greenery.

easy substitute: just omit the roots. replace the leaves with mint or basil.  
curry pastes

A brilliant device of Thai cooks to save time. Make a big batch and freeze in recipe-sized portions. Or just do what I do and make the most of the many excellent quality commercial curry pastes out there these days. Can be green, red or yellow. Red curry pastes tend to be a little sweeter and more earthy where green curry pastes tend to be more delicate and aromatic. Yellow or massaman curry pastes are fairley close to red with slight flavour differences. Mostly the differnt curry pastes can be used interchangeably in recipes. It's worth the trip to an asian grocery store or large supermarket to stock up. Or try making your own.

**easy substitute:** I'm afraid this is one ingredient where you either need to find the real thing or have a go at making your own – it's not difficult and the curry paste recipes in the class don't require any really crazy ingredients.

# A QUICK LIST OF THAI INGREDIENTS + EASY SUBSTITUTES

[CONTINUED]

green onions

## fish sauce

On it's own, you wouldn't want to go anywhere near it. But fish sauce is the go to seasoning when Thai cooks are looking to add saltiness to a dish. The flavour is salty and deeply savoury and luckily, no where near as 'fishy' as the aroma. The ingredients are usually just fermented fish juice and salt. It keeps for ages in the pantry, so if you're interested in getting into Thai cooking, it's really worth buying a bottle. Actually of all the ingredients in this list, fish sauce would be the number 1. new ingredient to try.

**easy substitute:** season with a little salt instead or try soy sauce.

## galangal

A member of the ginger family, it looks like ginger with a more reddish colour. The flavour is more peppery and vibrant than ginger. I haven't bothered using it in years as I find I like the flavour of regular ginger better.

**easy substitute:** fresh ginger, preferably younger pieces.

## ginger

Thai cooks prefer the milder flavour of young ginger which looks more plump and juicy than older ginger. So where possible avoid wrinkled, old dry ginger.

**easy substitute:** use a sparing amount of ground ginger powder or just omit it.

## green onions

One of the most confusing vegetables ever. Known as shallots, spring onions, scallions and various other guises. I prefer the term green onion. Fairly widely found. The whole stem can be eaten. I usually remove the roots and use the whites and about 3/4s of the green, leaving the coarser tops for the compost.

**easy substitute:** chives or garlic chives.

# A QUICK LIST OF THAI INGREDIENTS + EASY SUBSTITUTES

[CONTINUED]

## kaffir lime leaves

A member of the citrus family, kaffir lime trees have the most beautiful double shaped leaves. The smell is like a mixture of lime zest and sweet perfume. So lovely. The easiest way to ensure a good supply of kaffir lime leaves is to grow your own. Trees do well in pots but prefer a temperate to warm climate. I had a tree for years but when I moved to the mountains, I gave it to my sister for safe keeping in Sydney. Now I keep a stash of leaves in the freezer and top them up whenever I visit my sister.

**easy substitute:** lime zest.

## lemongrass

Another source of gorgeous fragrance in thai cooking. Lemongrass tastes uniquely lemony and wonderful. Just be careful to either chop it super finely or remove it before serving your dish as the stalks can be tough going to chew on. It's easy to grow so if you can't find it in your supermarket, try ordering a plant online.

**easy substitute:** lemon zest.

## oyster sauce

A thick dark coloured sauce that has a slightly sweet, savoury flavour. Not fishy at all. Generally doesn't contain very much real oysters. Works in a similar way to soy sauce to season dishes. Vegetarian 'oyster' sauces are available for those that aren't into eating creatures from the sea. It's often used in conjunction with fish sauce.

**easy substitute:** Either hoisin sauce or soy sauce and a touch of honey.

# A QUICK LIST OF THAI INGREDIENTS + EASY SUBSTITUTES

[CONTINUED]

## palm sugar

Made from the sap of palm trees. The flavour is somewhere between treacle and brown sugar and it tends to come pressed into blocks or little circles. I haven't bothered buying it in years as I find brown sugar works just as well and is much easier to handle.

**easy substitute:** regular brown sugar.

## shrimp paste

Would beat fish sauce in a contest of which ingredient had the most disgusting aroma. Commonly used in curry pastes so unless you're planning to make your own curry pastes from scratch, you probably won't need it. Often used in commercial curry pastes, but not all, so vegetarians are advised to read the labels.

**easy substitute:** use a little fish sauce instead or try mashed up anchovies or just skip it and add more salt.

## thai basil

Has a similar smell to basil with a slightly more minty aroma. Usually has purple stems and small leaves. I have grown Thai basil in the past, but these days I just use regular basil.

**easy substitute:** regular basil.

lemongrass

A black ceramic pot filled with a clear, light-colored Thai soup. The soup is garnished with fresh green cilantro leaves, a single large cooked shrimp with a red chili slice on top, and other smaller ingredients. The pot sits on a light-colored, weathered wooden surface. A semi-transparent text overlay is centered over the top half of the image.

*healthy*  
THAI SOUPS



thai coconut & mushroom soup

thai coconut & mushroom soup



It's hard to go past a steaming bowl of soup fragrant with lemongrass and lime. Feel free to take this base and adapt it to whatever you have in the fridge. It's one of those soups which works really well with all sorts of vegetables.

# THAI COCONUT + MUSHROOM SOUP

serves 2

1 can coconut milk (400mL / 14oz)  
1 1/2 cups vegetable stock  
2 tablespoons lime juice + zest of 1 lime  
2 lemongrass stalks, trimmed & bashed  
150g (5oz) oyster mushrooms, torn

1. Bring coconut milk and stock to the boil.
2. Add lime juice and zest, lemongrass and mushrooms.
3. Simmer for 5-10 minutes or until mushrooms are tender. Taste & season with more lime or salt.

VIDEO

# THAI COCONUT + MUSHROOM SOUP...

## leftover potential?

Wonderful. Keeps in the fridge for a week or so. Freezes well too.

## variations for fun

**no veg stock?** – replace with water and 2 tablespoons fish sauce or use chicken stock instead.

**richer** – use coconut cream instead of the milk.

**different veg** – cauliflower, broccoli, red capsicum (bell peppers), sweet potato, green beans and asparagus are all great. Just adjust the cooking time to suit your veg.

**different mushrooms** – if you can't find oyster mushrooms, button, field or other exotic mushrooms like shiitake will all work equally well.

**chicken** – add in a finely sliced chicken breast or a couple of thighs and simmer until chicken is cooked.

**prawn / shrimp** – add a few handfuls of peeled green prawns / shrimp and simmer until they just change colour and go opaque.

## problem solving guide

**bland** – season with salt, fish sauce or some extra lime juice.


**no lemongrass?** - replace with the zest of 1-2 lemons. if you can use kaffir lime leaves instead of the lime zest.

## serving suggestions

Great as a meal on it's own. Or as a starter to a Thai banquet.

hot & sour soup





hot & sour soup

The first time I had a hot and sour soup was in Ho Chi Min city in Vietnam. I still remember the addictive heat and fragrance. This simple Thai version doesn't contain the tomato or pineapple often found in hot and sour soups, but it's every bit as delicious, if not more so.

I love the idea of using fish sauce and water as an instant stock or soup base - a trick you can apply to non-thai dishes as well.

## HOT + SOUR SOUP

serves 2

2 tablespoons fish sauce  
1-2 red chillies, finely sliced  
2 kaffir lime leaves  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
8-12 large green prawns (shrimp), peeled & de-veined  
coriander (cilantro) leaves, to serve

1. Bring 3 cups water to the boil in a medium saucepan with the fish sauce, chillies, lime leaves and lime juice. Simmer for a few minutes.
2. Add the prawns and simmer for another 1-2 minutes or until the prawns have just changed colour to opaque.
3. Taste. Season with more fish sauce or lime juice or some salt. Serve with coriander (cilantro) leaves on top.

VIDEO

# HOT + SOUR SOUP...

## leftover potential?

OK. Will keep in the fridge for a few days. But the prawns are best as fresh as possible. Can be frozen.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – replace the prawns with mushrooms or chopped tofu. See below for fish sauce substitutes.

**no fish sauce?** – use vegetable, fish or chicken stock instead of the fish sauce + water.

**noodle soup** - cook rice or other noodles according to the packet and divide between 2 bowls. Top with the hot & sour soup.

**different herbs** – replace coriander with thai basil or vietnamese mint or regular basil or mint.

**chicken soup** – replace the prawns with 2 small chicken breasts or thigh fillets, finely sliced and replace fish sauce + water with chicken stock.

## problem solving guide

**too hot** – use less chillies, or deseed them next time.

**bland** – use more fish sauce and/or lime juice.

**can't find kaffir lime leaves?** - just use the zest of 1 lime instead.

**prawns / shrimp rubbery or tough** – a sure sign they've been overcooked. Next time watch them like a hawk and remove from the heat the very instant they change colour.

## serving suggestions

Lovely in big bowls with lime wedges on the side.

thai broccoli soup





thai broccoli soup

It's hard to go past a big bowl of veggie soup like this. Nurturing and fragrant, you can just feel it doing you good as you take in each spoonful.

# THAI BROCCOLI SOUP

serves 2

3 cups vegetable stock (powder or cubes are fine)  
2-3 tablespoons 'oyster' sauce  
2cm piece fresh ginger, peeled & finely sliced  
2 green onions, sliced  
1 bunch Chinese broccoli, very finely sliced

1. Bring stock, oyster sauce and ginger to the boil.
2. Add green onions and broccoli. Simmer for about 2 minutes or until broccoli is wilted & tender.
3. Taste. Season with extra oyster sauce if needed.

VIDEO

# THAI BROCCOLI SOUP...

## leftover potential?

Wonderful. Will keep in the fridge for a week or so.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – track down some vegetarian ‘oyster’ sauce. It does exist. Or try hoisin sauce instead.

**hot** – toss in a few finely sliced chillies.

**noodle soup** – cover rice noodles with boiling water. Stand until tender ( a few minutes) then drain and add to the soup.

**chicken & broccoli** – add some finely sliced chicken breast with the broccoli and simmer until the chicken is cooked through.

**can't find oyster sauce?** – replace with fish or soy instead.

**different broccoli** – feel free to use regular broccoli. 2 small heads should do the trick. You might like to puree it to make a smooth soup as well.

## problem solving guide

**too salty** – if using powdered stock, like I did, be careful not to make it too strong.

## serving suggestions

In deep bowls with a soup spoon. Can be served as a starter to part of a Thai banquet, but I like it best on its own.



thai chicken soup with lime

thai chicken soup with lime

This soup is equally delicious on a chilly winter evening or a hot summers day. I think the coconut creaminess makes it so warming in winter. But the fragrance of the coriander and lime leaves make it refreshing enough to serve when the weather is warmer.

If you can't find kaffir lime leaves, use the zest of a lime. It won't be the same but since you won't know any different it will still be wonderful.

# THAI CHICKEN SOUP WITH LIME

serves 2

1 can coconut milk (400mL / 14oz)  
2 tablespoon thai green curry paste  
3-4 chicken thigh fillets  
6 kaffir lime leaves,  
1 bunch coriander leaves

1. Soup: Place a large saucepan over a high heat.
2. Scoop a tablespoon of the coconut cream from the top of the can and add it to the saucepan with the curry paste.
3. Cook curry paste for about 15 seconds and then add 2 cups water and the remaining coconut milk.
4. While the water is coming to the boil, chop chicken into bight sized pieces and add to the pot along with the lime leaves.
5. Simmer gently for 3-4 minutes or until the chicken is just cooked through.
6. Serve with coriander leaves.

VIDEO

# THAI CHICKEN SOUP WITH LIME...

## leftover potential?

Great. Will keep in the fridge for a week or so.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – replace the chicken with tofu or button mushrooms.

**basil** – for a different fragrance replace the fresh coriander with fresh basil or better yet, fresh Thai basil.

**noodles** – for a more substantial soup, soften some rice noodles by covering in boiling water and standing while the chicken cooks. Then drain and add to the soup before bringing back to the boil.

**red soup** – replace green curry paste with red curry paste.

**no lime leaves?** – Replace with the zest of 1-2 fresh limes and serve with lime wedges.

## problem solving guide

**chicken tough** – it's important not to simmer to rapidly otherwise the chicken will over cook and end up too tough. Next time cook more gently. The other cause of tough chicken is the quality of the chicken you are using. Making sure the chicken is sliced across the grain (muscle fibres) helps with tenderness as well.

**chicken not cooked** – if you're nervous about your chicken, pick out a piece and chop it in half. If you can see any pink or bits that look translucent rather than white, leave for another few minutes before testing again.

**too hot** – curry pastes vary in intensity. Diluting with a little more coconut milk will help. Yoghurt or milk can help cool your tongue between sips of soup.

**bland** – different curry pastes vary in their intensity. If you're not happy with the flavour add a little more curry paste. And remember to be generous with the seasoning. A splash of fish sauce can help liven things up too.

**not coconutty enough** – different coconut milk brands vary quite considerably with the amount of actual coconut. The higher the fat content the more concentrated your coconut milk will be. I avoid 'lite' coconut milks, if you're worried about fat just use less coconut milk and more water and save yourself some money.

## serving suggestions

I prefer to serve this as a meal on its own with the coriander (cilantro) on the side. I like to leave the kaffir lime leaves in and eat them, but they can require a bit of chewing!



chicken laksa

chicken laksa

# CHICKEN LAKSA

serves 2

- 1 - 2 chicken breasts, very finely sliced
  - 1 can coconut milk (400g / 14oz)
  - 220g (8oz) fresh laksa noodles or singapore noodles
  - handful fresh basil leaves, to serve
- for the curry paste:
- 1 onion, peeled & chopped
  - 1 thumb-sized piece ginger, chopped
  - 1 tablespoon turmeric
  - 2 teaspoons chilli flakes (1 teaspoon chilli powder)
  - 1 lime, zest and juice

1. Whizz the laksa paste ingredients with 2 tablespoons oil in a food processor until you have a chunky puree.
2. Heat a few tablespoons peanut oil (or other neutral flavoured oil) in a large saucepan over a very high heat. Add chicken and stir fry quickly for 1 -2 minutes or until chicken is white and no longer pink. Remove from the pan and place in a clean bowl.
3. Stir fry laksa paste for a few minutes until it smells lovely and fragrant.
4. Add coconut milk and 2 cups water. Bring to a simmer.
5. Add noodles and bring back to a simmer, stirring to break up the noodles.
6. Return chicken to the pan. Taste and season with salt and possibly a pinch or two of sugar.
7. Serve with basil leaves on top.

VIDEO

# CHICKEN LAKSA...

## leftover potential?

The laksa paste can be made in advance and stored in the fridge for a week or so or in the freezer for longer. It's best if the basil is added at the last minute but the soup can be made in advance and reheated. The noodles can keep soaking up liquid so be prepared for that. You might like to add the noodles just before serving.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – Replace the chicken with cubes of tofu and/ or mixed vegetables, either frozen or fresh. Add the veg with the coconut milk and water and simmer for a few minutes until cooked. Red peppers (capsicum) are lovely as are green beans, carrots, bean sprouts, zucchini (courgettes). Cauliflower would have to be my favourite veg in laksa because it soaks up all the lovely sauce and tastes wonderful.

**gluten-free** – Replace the wheat noodles with rice noodles or mung bean noodles or even gluten-free spaghetti. Some traditional Laksas contain a mix of both yellow wheat noodles and white rice vermicelli.

**dairy-free** – replace cream with coconut milk.

## problem solving guide

**too bland** – Season more generously with salt or fish sauce. Or add a dash of chilli powder or chilli flakes. If you've used a commercial paste, add more or try another brand next time.

**don't have any noodles** – No problem. Cook some spaghetti or bucatini until not quite done then drain and add as above. Or do the same with dried wheat noodles.

**no fresh ginger?** – Substitute a tablespoon dried ground ginger.

**no turmeric?** – Substitute in curry powder (preferably one that has turmeric high up on the ingredients list) or use ground cumin – the colour won't be as yellow but it will still taste heavenly.

**too hot?** – Be careful with the chilli! For now you can dilute it with more coconut milk or just serve with some cooling cucumber or yoghurt.

## serving suggestions

A meal on its own.

*healthy*

# THAI SALADS





salmon, lime & chilli salad

salmon, lime & chilli salad

When my Irishman asked what was for dinner and I told him it was this salad he wasn't very impressed with the idea and asked if we could have some beef or potatoes with it. After we ate the salad for dinner, however his story had done a complete backflip and he wanted to know if there were seconds! We both loved how the freshness of the herbs and dressing contrasted the rich hot salmon.

# SALMON LIME + CHILLI SALAD

serves 2

2 salmon fillets  
1-2 small red chillies, finely sliced  
4 tablespoons lime juice  
bunch mint, leaves picked  
bunch coriander (cilantro) leaves picked

1. Heat a pan on a medium high heat. Rub the salmon with a little oil.
2. Sear the salmon, skin side down first until cooked to your liking. I like it quite rare in the middle and cooked it about 4 minutes on the first side and 3 on the second.
3. Meanwhile, combine lime juice and chilli with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Taste & season with salt or fish sauce.
4. When the salmon is cooked, slice or tear into chunks, discarding the skin or keeping it as you like.
5. Toss the herbs in the dressing and serve on top of salmon chunks.

VIDEO

# SALMON, LIME + CHILLI SALAD...

## leftover potential?

The salad will wilt but the salmon will keep in the fridge for 3-4 days.

## variations for fun

**different fish** – most fish fillets will work. Just adjust the cooking time accordingly.

**beef salad** – replace the salmon fillets with steaks.

**vegetarian / vegan** – replace salmon with tofu or seitan.

**different leaves** – feel free to use baby spinach or other salad leaves instead of or as well as the herbs. Thai basil is also really lovely.

## problem solving guide

**fish sticking to the pan** – make sure your pan is hot before adding the fish and be generous with the oil.

**fish burning** – reduce the heat or turn the fish so the other side gets cooked.

**bland** – spike with more lime and or chilli. You may need a little salt or fish sauce.

## serving suggestions

Great as a quick healthy weeknight meal. You could skip the salmon chopping step and serve the whole fillets with the salad if you like.

coconut poached chicken salad





coconut poached chicken salad

Chicken breast can be quite dry so I love the solution of poaching it in coconut milk to keep everything nice and moist. It's super important to make sure you keep the lid on the pot for the full 20 minutes, no peeking!

# COCONUT POACHED CHICKEN SALAD

serves 2

1 can coconut milk (400mL / 14oz)  
2 small chicken breasts  
large handful green beans, stalks trimmed  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
bunch thai or regular basil, leaves picked

1. Bring the coconut milk to the boil in a pan just large enough to fit the chicken in a single layer snugly.
2. Add chicken and turn to coat in the coconut milk. Then place the beans on top. Simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Cover the pot and remove from the heat. Stand for 20 minutes.
4. When the 20 minutes are up combine lime juice and fish sauce with 6 tablespoons of the coconut milk poaching liquid. Taste and season with more fish sauce, lime or coconut milk.
5. Toss beans in the dressing. Slice chicken finely and toss in with the beans along with the basil leaves.

VIDEO

# COCONUT POACHED CHICKEN SALAD...

## leftover potential?

OK. The basil will wilt but will keep in the fridge for a week or so.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – replace the chicken with tofu or large field mushrooms. No need to stand, just simmer until tender. And replace the fish sauce with salt or soy sauce.

**fish-free** – replace fish sauce with salt or soy sauce.

**beef** – Cook 2 steaks and slice. Poach the beans in coconut milk until no longer crunchy. Then proceed form step 4.

**different veg** – try broccoli, cauliflower, red capsicum (bell peppers), or asparagus.

## problem solving guide

**chicken not cooked through** – no problems – just bring back to the simmer for another 2-3 minutes then test again. Larger chicken breasts could be sliced in half lengthwise so they cooked in the allotted 20 minutes.

**chicken too tough** – the most likely cause is simmering too rapidly and overcooking. Slice super finely and add a little extra splash of coconut milk to the dressing to keep everything lovely and moist.

**beans too crunchy** – it can be tough getting them cooked at the same time as the chicken. If you hate crunchy beans. Remove chicken from the pot and simmer the beans until you're happy.

## serving suggestions

Lovely either at room temperature or as a cold salad on its own. OR as part of a Thai banquet.

The leftover poaching liquid can be used anywhere you'd use coconut milk. Curries, soups etc.

thai green salad





thai green salad

In Thailand it's not common to see salad served as a side dish, but old habits die hard in my house so I often make this 'Thai' salad on the side. Feel free to use the dressing on regular leaves as well.

Olive oil isn't traditionally used in Thailand either, so feel free to replace it with water if you'd prefer a lighter dressing.

## THAI GREEN SALAD

serves 2 as a side

2-3 tablespoons lime juice  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
1 lebanese cucumber  
1 bunch mint, leaves picked  
1 bunch coriander, leaves picked

1. Combine lime juice, fish sauce and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a bowl.
2. Using a vegetable peeler, shave ribbons of cucumber into the dressing. Discard the core of seeds from the centre of the cucumber.
3. Toss cucumber, mint and coriander in the dressing and serve ASAP.

VIDEO

# THAI GREEN SALAD...

## leftover potential?

Not great once dressed as the herbs will wilt. Still edible but not as fresh.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian / fish-free** – replace the fish sauce with soy sauce.

**hot!** – lovely with a pinch of dried chilli powder or flakes.

**different herbs** – basil, Thai basil, Vietnamese mint or parsley can all be used.

**different leaves** – replace the herbs with washed salad leaves or a mixture of herbs and salad leaves.

## problem solving guide

**bland** – use more fish sauce or lime to season.

**difficult to eat** – consider tearing or chopping the herbs into finer slices.

**don't have a vegetable peeler?** no problem, forget about ribbons and just finely slice the cucumber into rounds.

## serving suggestions

Great as an accompaniment to any Thai dish.



thai *beef* salad

Feel free to play around with this salad. I've used rare roast beef from the deli to keep things simple, but if you have more time use steaks cooked to your liking and finely sliced.

A little fresh chilli wouldn't go astray.

# THAI BEEF SALAD

serves 2

3 tablespoons lime juice  
3 tablespoons fish sauce  
2 lebanese cucumbers  
200g (1/2lb) rare roast beef  
1 bunch mint, leaves picked

1. Combine the zest of one lime, lime juice, fish sauce and 3 tablespoons peanut oil in a medium sized bowl.
2. Halve cucumbers lengthwise and chop into little half-moons. Add to the dressing.
3. Tear the beef into bite sized pieces and add to the dressing.
4. Add mint leaves and toss gently.

thai beef salad

VIDEO

# THAI BEEF SALAD...

## leftover potential?

This can easily be prepared ahead and kept in the fridge until you're ready to eat. If I was making in advance I'd just pop the mint leaves on top and wait until serving before tossing them into the dressing to avoid them wilting.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – A thai mushroom salad would be lovely. Replace the beef with finely sliced roast or pan fried field mushrooms. And use soy sauce instead of the fish sauce.

**fish-free** – Replace the fish sauce with soy sauce.

**cucumber-free** – My Irishman is allergic to cucumber so if I was making this salad for him I'd use sliced green capsicum (bell peppers) or a few handfuls of well washed bean sprouts in place of the cucumber.

## problem solving guide

**too bland** – Season with salt, pepper or more fish sauce.

**too salty** – different brands of fish sauces vary quite a bit in saltiness and flavour strength. Next time use less fish sauce

**no fish sauce?** – Soy sauce will be acceptable but less authentic.

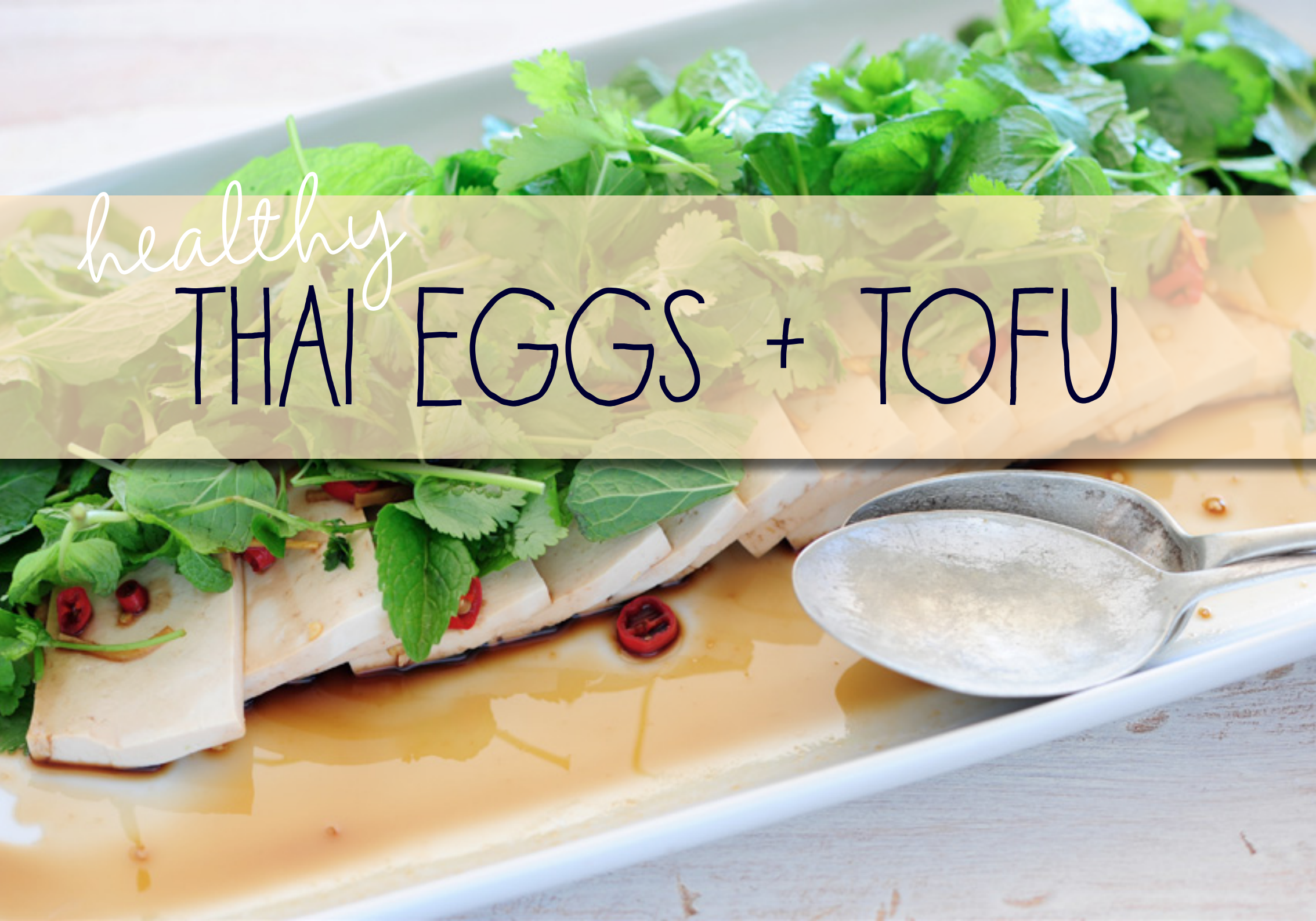
**need a chilli hit?** – Real Thai people wouldn't even think of serving a salad like this without chilli! I ran out of ingredients space with my self-imposed 5 ingredient limit but you could easily toss a couple of finely chopped fresh red chillies in with the dressing.


## serving suggestions

Perfect on its own or as part of a Thai meal


*healthy*

# THAI EGGS + TOFU



A top-down view of a Thai omelette cooking in a dark grey non-stick pan. The omelette is a bright yellow color and is topped with a generous amount of fresh green basil leaves, sliced green onions, and a dark, thick sauce. The pan is set on a light-colored wooden surface. The text "thai omelette" is written in a cursive font in the bottom left corner.

thai omelette



thai omelette

This recipe was inspired by the wonderful light 'egg net' omelettes that my favourite Thai place makes. While I love the restaurant 'net' version, it's far too much hassle for home cooking. Whereas this simple omelette takes only a few minutes to prepare and packs a big flavour punch.

# THAI OMELETTE

serves 1

3 eggs

1-2 small red chillies, finely sliced

1 green onion, finely sliced

1/2 bunch mint, leaves picked & torn if large

2-4 tablespoons oyster sauce

1. Heat a small fry pan on a medium heat. Meanwhile whisk eggs and chilli until just combined. Season.

2. Add a little oil to the pan and then the egg. Cook for about 30 seconds then gently move the cooked edges into the middle and allow the runny egg to run out to the sides.

3. Leave for another 30 seconds to 1 minute or until the egg is almost all set.

4. Remove from the heat. Top with herbs and drizzle with oyster sauce.

VIDEO

# THAI OMELETTE...

## leftover potential?

OK. But nicer when freshly made. Difficult to reheat without overcooking the egg.

## variations for fun

**vegetarian** – use vegetarian ‘oyster’ sauce or replace with hoisin or sweet soy sauce.

**vegan** – pan fry some sliced tofu and serve with the herbs, chilli and sauce. See above for veggie oyster sauce options.

**herby** – for an extra freshness add in 1/2 bunch fresh coriander leaves.

**crunchy** – add a few handfuls of bean sprouts to the mint.

**no oyster sauce?** – serve with lime juice instead.

## problem solving guide

**bland** – try a little more oyster sauce.

**too salty** – go easy on the oyster sauce.

**eggs rubbery** – this means the eggs have been overcooked. Next time remove from the heat before the egg is completely set. Remember it will keep cooking after the heat has been turned off.

**eggs ‘snotty’** – if there are watery or other icky bits it means the eggs are undercooked. You could pop back in the pan with the undercooked side down for a few seconds if you like.

## serving suggestions

Great as a quick meal on its own or as part of a Thai banquet.

thai herb & ginger tofu



thai herb & ginger tofu

I just love the freshness and simplicity of this dish. While the tofu is absolutely delish and much more flavoursome than you'd think, I also love the beef option below.

## THAI HERB + GINGER TOFU

serves 2

- 4 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2-3 small red chillies, finely sliced
- 2cm (1in) piece ginger, chopped into matchsticks
- 300g (10oz) firm tofu
- 1 bunch mint, leaves picked
- 1 bunch coriander (cilantro), torn into 1/3s

1. Place soy, honey, chilli and ginger in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil.
2. Meanwhile, pat tofu dry with paper towel and finely slice. Arrange on a serving plate.
3. Pour the hot dressing over the tofu. Top with the herbs.

VIDEO

# THAI HERB + GINGER TOFU...

## leftover potential?

OK. The herbs will wilt but the tofu will be lovely with some time to marinate in the dressing.

## variations for fun

**soy-free** – replace the soy and honey with 6 tablespoons oyster sauce. And use chicken or beef (below) instead of the tofu.

**carnivore** – replace tofu with 2 steaks cooked until medium rare (or however you like). Slice steaks and drizzle with the dressing and top with herbs. Change the name to thai beef salad.

**chicken** – replace tofu with 1-2 poached chicken breasts [recipe over here]

**mushroom** – replace the tofu with 4 large roast field mushrooms.

**warm** – poach the whole tofu in the dressing for a few minutes until warmed through. Slice and serve as above.

## problem solving guide

**too salty** – its a good idea to taste the dressing before adding to the tofu. Remember that the tofu will soak up a lot of the seasoning. A little sprinkling of brown sugar can help balance if you find it too salty. Next time use less soy.

**bland** – try a different brand of tofu next time. For now, think about increasing the amount of dressing.

**too hot!** – next time use less chillies, or deseed them first. For now, pick the chillies out and discard. Serve with a little yoghurt to cool burning tongues.

## serving suggestions

Lovely as a light lunch or as part of a Thai banquet.

*healthy*

# THAI CURRY PASTES



A close-up photograph of a white plate containing a vibrant yellow curry paste. The paste is thick and coats several ingredients, including sliced mushrooms, round carrot slices, and a whole mushroom. A generous amount of fresh green cilantro leaves is piled on top. The background is softly blurred, showing a wooden surface and a silver spoon.

yellow *curry* paste

This curry paste is slightly different because we're cooking the aromatic ingredients before making the paste. This gives it a lovely deeply caramelised flavour.

# YELLOW CURRY PASTE

makes about 3/4 cup

1 large onion, diced

6 cloves garlic, smashed & peeled

6 coriander roots

6 large red chillies, chopped

1 tablespoon turmeric

1 tablespoon ground coriander

1. Bring coconut milk and stock to the boil.
2. Add lime juice and zest, lemongrass and mushrooms.
3. Simmer for 5-10 minutes or until mushrooms are tender. Taste & season with more lime or salt.

VIDEO



red curry paste

For some reason I tend to turn to a red curry when I want a beef Thai curry and go for green when I'm in the mood for chicken. No reason really, so feel free to use this paste however you prefer.

# THAI RED CURRY PASTE

makes 4-5 tablespoons  
(enough for a curry serving 2-3)

- 6 large red chillies, deseeded
- 3 stalks lemon grass, sliced
- 1 thumb-sized piece ginger, chopped
- 4-6 cloves garlic, peeled

1. Whizz the chillies, lemon grass, ginger and garlic with 2 tablespoons oil in a food processor until you have a chunky puree.
2. Use as per the red curry recipe.



Whenever I think of jungle curry, I automatically start singing 'jungle boogie' from Pulp Fiction in my head. Sorry! now you'll have the same association.

# JUNGLE CURRY PASTE

serves 2-3

- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 1 red onion, peeled & chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, peeled
- 5 large green chillies
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- zest of 1 lemon

Whizz pepper, onion, garlic, chilli, cumin and lemon zest in a food processor with a few tablespoons water until you have a thick paste.

VIDEO



*healthy*  
**THAI CURRIES**



*jungle* curry





jungle curry

Whenever I think of jungle curry, I automatically start singing 'jungle boogie' from Pulp Fiction in my head. Sorry! now you'll have the same association. The thing that makes a jungle curry different is that it's not based on coconut milk and traditionally they relied only on peppercorns to give their legendary heat.

# JUNGLE CURRY

serves 2

for the curry paste:

- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 1 red onion, peeled & chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, peeled
- 5 large green chillies
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- zest of 1 lemon

for the curry:

- 400g (14oz) minced (ground) chicken, pork or beef
- 3 long baby eggplant, sliced into bit sized pieces
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1 bunch coriander, leaves picked

1. Whizz pepper, onion, garlic, chilli, cumin and lemon zest in a food processor with a few tablespoons water until you have a thick paste.
2. Heat a little oil in a large pot. Cook chicken, stirring often until browned and no longer pink.
3. Add the curry paste and stir fry for 2-3 minutes or until everything smells amazing.
4. Add the eggplant, 1 1/2 cups water and the fish sauce. Bring to a simmer.
5. Cook, covered for about 5 minutes or until eggplant is soft. Taste season and serve with coriander leaves on top.

VIDEO

# JUNGLE CURRY...

## leftover potential?

Excellent! Will keep in the fridge for a week or so. OK to freeze.

## variations for fun

**vegetarian / vegan** – replace the fish sauce with soy sauce. Try doubling the eggplant or adding in other veg such as sweet potato, frozen peas or mushrooms and simmer until tender.

**can't find baby eggplant?** – replace with a small regular eggplant diced into chunks. Or try different veg such as green beans, bamboo shoots, frozen peas, sweet potato or mushrooms.

**red or green curry** – skip the jungle curry paste and replace with 3-4 tablespoons home made or commercial curry paste.

**fish-free** – replace the fish sauce with soy sauce.

## problem solving guide

**no food processor?** – just finely chop the curry paste ingredients by hand. Allow a little longer for the paste to soften and cook.

**bland** – more black pepper and fish sauce please!

**ground meat sticking to the pan** – adding more oil can help but don't worry about it too much as it will add lovely depth of flavour to the sauce when you add the water.

## serving suggestions

Lovely with steamed rice or cauliflower rice.

yellow curry of chicken & sweet potato





yellow curry of *chicken &* sweet potato

This is one of my all time favourite curries. And the good news is the turmeric which is used to make the wonderful yellow colour is good for you too!

# YELLOW CURRY OF CHICKEN + SWEET POTATO

serves 3-4

1 quantity yellow curry paste  
400mL (1 1/2 cups) coconut milk  
2 tablespoons fish sauce  
4-8 chicken drumsticks  
750g (3/4lb) sweet potato, scrubbed and sliced into  
1cm (1/2in) rounds  
Large bunch coriander (cilantro), to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Place curry paste, coconut milk, and fish sauce in an oven proof casserole. Stir. Add chicken and sweet potato.
3. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes.
4. Turn chicken and bake for another 30 minutes or until chicken and sweet potato is cooked. Serve in bowls topped with coriander leaves.

VIDEO

# YELLOW CURRY OF CHICKEN + SWEET POTATO...

## leftover potential?

Brilliant! Improves with age. Will keep in the fridge for a week or so. And freezes well.

## variations for fun

**vegetarian / vegan** – season with salt instead of the fish sauce and replace chicken with 1-2 drained cans of chickpeas added at the half way mark.

**different chicken** – feel free to use chicken breasts or thigh fillets. Decrease the cooking time to about 40 minutes. Thighs on the bone can also be used.

**fish-free** – just season with salt instead of the fish sauce.

**different veg** – the sweet potato is pretty special but pumpkin, parsnip, turnip, carrots, cauliflower or jerusalem artichokes will all be lovely.

**commercial curry paste** – use 3-4 tablespoons commercial red or yellow curry paste and add an extra 1/2 cup water.

**short on time?** – use a commercial curry paste and simmer on the stove until the chicken and sweet potato are tender, around 30 minutes.

**no coconut milk?** – replace with 1 cup water and stir in 1/2 cup cream just before serving.

## problem solving guide

**sweet potato falling apart** – this means it's overcooked. Leaving the skin on can help keep it together. Or next time chop into larger pieces so it takes longer to cook.

**bland** – season with a little more fish sauce and possibly a little palm sugar or brown sugar. And add more chilli!

**too sweet** – the sweet potato can be intense. Add more fish sauce or some salt to balance it.

**too watery** – remove the chicken and sweet potato and simmer until thickened.

**too thick** – add in a little more water.

**chicken tough** – a sign of over cooked chicken. Next time check after 45 minutes.

## serving suggestions

Lovely in big bowls as a meal on its own. Or serve with steamed rice or finely grated raw cauliflower (aka cauliflower rice).



thai red *veggie* curry

thai red *veggie* curry

It's hard to go past a steaming bowl of soup fragrant with lemongrass and lime. Feel free to take this base and adapt it to whatever you have in the fridge. It's one of those soups which works really well with all sorts of vegetables.

# THAI RED VEGGIE CURRY

serves 2-3

4-6 tablespoons red curry paste  
1 can coconut cream (400mL / 14oz)  
300g (10oz) firm tofu, drained & chopped  
1 bag frozen cauliflower (500g / 1lb)  
handful fresh basil leaves

1. Heat a large saucepan on a high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons peanut or other neutral oil to the pan and add curry paste. Cook for about 20 seconds or until it smells heavenly.
3. Quickly add coconut cream. Stir and add tofu and cauliflower.
4. Simmer for about 7 -8 minutes or until cauliflower is cooked & tofu is hot.
5. Taste & season, adding a little brown sugar if you like it slightly sweet.

VIDEO

# THAI RED VEGGIE CURRY...

## leftover potential?

Absolutely. Reheats like a dream.

## variations for fun

**carnivore** – Replace tofu with an equal quantity of finely sliced chicken breast or beef. Stir fry meat first in the pan until brown, remove and keep warm while you cook the curry as above then add the meat back at the end and bring back to a simmer.

**vegan / vegetarian** – Make sure your curry paste doesn't contain shrimp paste or fish sauce. Ayam brand is OK.

## problem solving guide

**too bland** – What? Stir in more curry paste or season generously with salt or fish sauce.

**too creamy** – I use coconut cream because I like it nice and rich. Feel free to use coconut milk instead or dilute it down with a little water.

**too thick** – add a little water.

**tofu breaking up** – even firm tofu is still quite delicate. Cutting into squares (cubes) instead of rectangles can help. But I think it looks a bit more rustic.

## serving suggestions

Great on its own. Kinda like a stew / soup. If you're craving rice, you could serve with some breakfast lentils or other lentils,

To make more of an Asian style shared meal, serve with a stir fry like the broccoli & chicken stir fry from this weeks class.



thai green chicken curry

thai green chicken curry

I still remember the first time I had a thai green chicken curry. It really blew my mind with the fragrance and flavour, the lightness and the rich creaminess all in one.

# THAI GREEN CHICKEN CURRY

serves 2-3

2 small chicken breasts

1 can coconut milk (400g / 14oz)

2 tablespoons fish sauce

small handful basil leaves, optional

for the curry paste:

1 bunch coriander (cilantro), leaves & stems

1 small onion

6 large green chillies, deseeded

3 stalks lemon grass, sliced

1 thumb-sized piece ginger, chopped

1. Whizz the spice paste ingredients with 2 tablespoons oil in a food processor until you have a chunky puree.
2. Heat a few tablespoons peanut oil in a large frying pan and stir-fry the chicken for a few minutes or until starting to brown. Remove from the pan and keep warm.
3. Add the spice paste to the pan and cook, stirring for about a minute or until the spice paste smells fragrant.
4. Add the coconut milk and fish sauce and bring to a simmer. Cook gently for about 5 minutes or until the sauce has thickened slightly.
5. Return the chicken and any juices to the pan and bring back to a simmer. Taste, season and serve hot.

VIDEO

# THAI GREEN CHICKEN CURRY...

## leftover potential?

Curry tends to improve with a day or two in the fridge. So feel free to make in advance and gently reheat before serving. You could also make the curry paste in advance and either freeze for a few months or keep it in the fridge for up to a week.

## variations for fun

**vegan or vegetarian** – replace chicken with tofu or the same weight of cooked lentils or even some mixed vegetables or a combination of these. And use sea salt to season the curry instead of the fish sauce.

**beef** – the other famous thai green curry – just replace the chicken with diced beef fillet.

## problem solving guide

**bitter** – if the spice paste gets burned, before you add the tomato, you'll get bitter flavours. Be careful at this step.

**tough chicken** – if the chicken is cooked too long it tends to go tough, Next time make sure you cook it less.

**too hot** – chillies vary considerably in their intensity. And people vary considerably in their sensitivity. Always err on the side of adding less chilli, you can always add more if you like, but it's hard to cool a curry down once it's cooked.

## problem solving guide

**not hot enough** – see above regarding chilli variability. Serve extra green chillies on the side or serve dried chilli powder or chilli flakes so your guests can adjust the heat level themselves.

**watery** – sounds like you haven't simmered the sauce for long enough. It only takes about ten minutes but without the simmering the sauce won't be very thick.

**can't find lemon grass?** – just substitute in the zest of one lemon.

**can't find fish sauce?** – no problem. you could just season with salt or try a little soy sauce – the flavour profile won't be as light and clean but it will still be lovely.

**can't find coconut milk?** – substitute in half water half whipping cream (that's pure cream for the australians). Again this won't taste as authentic but will still be lovely

**prefer to use commercial curry paste?** – just substitute in 3-4 tablespoons commercial curry paste for the paste in the recipe here. Since they do vary in strength, you'll need to tweak the amount to get it right for your palate.

## serving suggestions

Serve with steamed rice or simple lentils.

massaman curry



Massaman curry is normally slow cooked with beef and potatoes. We're lightening it up and speeding it up by using chicken thigh fillets and serving on a bed of baby spinach instead of the spuds.

# MASSAMAN CURRY

massaman curry

serves 2-3

500g (1lb) chicken thigh fillets  
4-6 tablespoons massaman curry paste  
400mL (14oz) coconut milk  
1/2 cup roasted peanuts  
4-6 sprigs fresh curry leaves, optional  
4 handfuls baby spinach, to serve

1. Heat some olive oil in a large pot. Finely slice chicken and stir fry over a high heat for a few minutes or until no longer pink.
2. Add curry paste and stir fry for another 30 seconds before adding the coconut milk and curry leaves, if using.
3. Bring to a simmer and cook for another few minutes or until chicken is just cooked through.

VIDEO

# MASSAMAN CURRY...

leftover potential?

Will keep for over a week in the fridge.

variations for fun

**carnivore** – replace the chicken with beef chuck or stewing steak. Simmer gently for an hour or until the beef is tender.

**nut-free** – just skip the peanuts and serve with fresh coriander leaves (cilantro) instead.

**vegetarian** – replace the chicken breast with firm tofu chopped finely and some fresh cauliflower chopped into florettes. Simmer curry until the cauli is tender – 10 minutes or so.

**vegan** – replace the chicken with 2 cans drained lentils.

**budget** – serve with steamed rice to stretch the curry to 4 servings or stir in a few handfuls of cooked potatoes.

problem solving guide

**watery** – If you prefer a thicker curry, simmer for longer to reduce the sauce.

**can't find fresh curry leaves** – frozen are good if you can find them. Or just skip them all together and keep it simple.

**can't find massaman curry paste?** – replace with a Thai red curry paste.

**bland** – don't forget to be generous with the seasoning. A little more curry paste will help.

serving suggestions

I like this as a simple dinner on its own. Or serve as part of an Asian banquet with a stir fry and some steamed rice or cauliflower rice.



*healthy*

# THAI STIR FRIES



triple 'B' stir fry

So what are the three Bs? Beef, bok choy and basil of course! Although you could use broccoli or bamboo shoots instead.

triple 'B' stir fry

## TRIPLE 'B' STIR FRY

serves 2

2 steaks, trimmed & finely sliced  
2-3 small red chillies, finely sliced  
3 tablespoons oyster sauce  
3 tablespoons fish sauce  
1 bunch bok choy, leaves separated  
1 bunch basil, leaves picked

1. Prep the ingredients as per the list above. Combine oyster sauce and fish sauce in a small bowl.
2. Heat a wok or large frying pan until super hot.
3. Add a little oil and stir fry the beef and chilli until the beef is just browned. About 1-2 minutes. Remove beef and place in a clean container.
4. Add bok choy to the wok and stir fry until wilted, another 2-3 minutes. Return beef to the pan along with the sauces.
5. Cook for a few seconds until everything is hot. Remove from the heat and stir in basil.

VIDEO

# TRIPLE B STIR FRY...

leftover potential?

OK. But best when freshly made.

variations for fun

**the triple C stir fry** – replace beef with 2 small chicken breasts, replace bok choy with carrots cut into bite sized sticks, replace the basil with coriander or cashew nuts.

**vegetarian / vegan** – replace beef with tofu, use salt instead of the fish sauce and use a vegetarian oyster sauce.

**pescetarian** – replace the beef with firm fleshed fish or peeled green prawns.

**no fish or oyster sauce?** – season with a few tablespoons soy sauce instead.

**different veg** – chinese broccoli, broccoli, cauliflower and choy sum are all good instead of the bok choy.

**different herbs** – coriander or mint work instead of or as well as the basil.

problem solving guide

**tough steak** – Cutting the meat as thinly as possible across the 'grain' (or muscle fibres) makes a big difference too. Over cooked meat will be tough and dry so make sure you only cook it for long enough to change the colour. Unfortunately there isn't really anything you can do to 'fix' tough meat. Another cause is if the heat isn't hot enough or if you add too much food to the wok and it 'stews' or simmers rather than being seared. If you find this happening, stop and remove the food from the wok. Start again and cook the food in batches.

**burning** – you're not stirring fast enough! Adding the sauce too early can cause it to burn as well.

**veg too crunchy** – it's important to finely slice your veg so they cook as quickly as possible.

**too bland** – season with more sauce or salt & pepper.

**to dry** – try adding a little more oil or sauce or both.

serving suggestions

Lovely on it's own in a big bowl. Or serve with steamed jasmine or cauliflower rice.



summer chicken stir fry

We're using ground (minced) chicken because it save the chopping step and cooks much faster than larger slices of chicken. But feel free to use breasts or thighs if you prefer.

# SUMMER CHICKEN STIR FRY

serves 2

400g (14oz) minced (ground) chicken  
2 medium zucchini, sliced into rounds  
2-3 tablespoons soy sauce  
large handful basil leaves  
handful almonds or cashews

1. Heat a wok on a fierce heat.
2. Add a little oil and stir fry the chicken until no longer pink. Place in a clean bowl.
3. Add a little more oil and stir fry the zucchini for a few minutes or until just starting to soften.
4. Return the chicken to the pan and season with soy. Stir fry until chicken is hot.
5. Remove from heat and sprinkle over basil & nuts.

summer chicken stir fry

VIDEO

# SUMMER CHICKEN STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

Keeps well in the fridge for a week or so. But the flavours and textures are best when its hot from the wok,

## variations for fun

**beef** - replace the chicken with ground (minced) beef.

**vegan / vegetarian** – replace the chicken with crumbled tofu or setian.

**different herbs** – replace the basil with mint or coriander (cilantro).

**different veg** – replace the zucchini with pretty much any veg that will cook in a short time. Asian greens like bok choy are great or try carrots, snow peas, or sugar snap peas.

**soy-free** – replace the soy sauce with braggs liquid aminos or fish sauce or oyster sauce..

## problem solving guide

**too dry** – splash in some more oil.

**don't own a wok?** – Stir fry in your largest fry pan or skillet.

**too bland** – season with a little more soy. And make sure you're using best quality free range chicken.

**chicken tough** – two possible causes. Either the chicken is over cooked or the heat wasn't high enough so the chicken 'stewed' rather than being quickly stir fried. If you think your wok isn't hot enough, best to cook the chicken in batches.

## serving suggestions

Great as a super quick dinner on its own. Or serve with steamed or cauliflower rice.

chicken & cashew nut stir fry



chicken & cashew nut stir fry

I ordered this the first ever time I went to a Thai restaurant. I can still remember how it blew me away with the tenderness of the chicken, the nutty crunch of the cashews and the exotic, pungent sauce.

# CHICKEN + CASHEW NUT STIR FRY

serves 2

100g cashew nuts  
1 chicken breast, finely sliced  
3 tablespoons oyster sauce  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
3 green onions (scallions), finely sliced

1. Heat a few tablespoons olive or peanut oil in a large wok or frying pan (skillet) over a high heat.
2. Stir fry chicken and cashew nuts for a few minutes or until chicken is just cooked through.
3. Quickly add the sauces and stir to heat through.
4. Taste and season with a little sugar if you like.
5. Remove from the heat and toss in green onions (scallions).

VIDEO

# CHICKEN + CASHEW NUT STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

Wonderful. Keeps in the fridge for a week or so. Freezes well too.

## variations for fun

**vegetarian / vegan** – Replace the chicken with about 200g (7oz) firm tofu cut into small chunks and replace the oyster and fish sauce with hoisin sauce.

**nut free** – Replace cashews with another chicken breast and toss in a large handful of fresh basil at the end.

## problem solving guide

**too salty** – Fish and oyster sauces vary in their level of saltiness. Next time try using less sauce but for now, sweeten with a little brown sugar to temper the salt.

**too dry** – Sounds like you need a little more sauce. Add more of both the oyster and fish sauces in the ratio 3:1. A little water can help as well.

**chicken too dry or tough** – Its really critical not to overcook the chicken when stir frying. Next time make sure your chicken is chopped really finely, that you use a high heat and only cook the chicken until it is no longer pink.

**chicken still pink** – Ick, no one likes undercooked chicken. Best to pop it back in the pan for a few minutes. Next time chop the chicken into smaller pieces so it cooks quickly. Also make sure that all your chicken pieces are about the same size

## serving suggestions

Serve with steamed rice or steamed veggies. Or serve with iceberg lettuce leaves for a different take on sang choi bau.

chicken & basil stir fry



I love using ground or minced meat in stir fries because you don't need to worry about the meat being tough. It also cooks more quickly because of the larger surface area in touch with the heat.

# CHICKEN + BASIL STIR FRY

serves 2

450g (1 lb) ground (minced) chicken  
3 - 4 red chillies, sliced  
1 bunch bok choy, rinsed and trimmed  
4 tablespoons oyster sauce  
1/2 bunch basil, leaves picked

1. Preheat a large frying pan or wok on a very high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons of peanut oil and cook chicken, stirring frequently until no longer pink and starting to brown.
3. Add chilli and bok choy and continue to cook over a high heat until bok choy is just wilted.
4. Add oyster sauce and cook for another minute or until hot. Taste & season.
5. Remove from heat and toss in basil.

VIDEO

chicken & basil stir fry

# CHICKEN + BASIL STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

You can reheat but I prefer stir fries hot from the pan.

## variations for fun

**vegan / vegetarian** – Replace the chicken with crumbled firm tofu and possibly some finely sliced mushrooms. Use soy or hoisin sauce instead of the oyster sauce.

**fun** – explore different vegetables or meat. Ground beef or pork would be equally as good. Broccoli, zucchini and red peppers (capsicum) are all great additions.

**more substantial** - add in a handful of roasted cashews..

## problem solving guide

**too bland** – Season with salt & pepper. And more sauce.

**too dry** – Add a little more sauce.

**can't find oyster sauce** – Replace with soy sauce or fish sauce. Both of these are a lot more salty than oyster sauce so start by adding half as much as the oyster sauce.

**can't find bok choy?** – Replace with spinach or other Asian greens or even chopped broccoli.

**basil out of season** – Basil can be expensive out of season. Feel free to substitute mint or coriander leaves.

## serving suggestions

Great on its own. Or serve as part of an Asian meal with a curry on the side.

Die-hard rice fans will enjoy this with a side of steamed rice. Or for Slow Carb fans try serving with breakfast lentils.

green *bean* stir fry





green bean stir fry

I think green beans are such an under rated vegetable. Compared with the glamorous asparagus, bean seem to get forgotten about. So I wanted to highlight their beauty as part of the veggie cooking class with a simple stir fry.

While I usually cook with dried chilli because it tends to be what I have on hand, sometimes it's nice to get some fresh heat. Splitting the chillies lengthwise like this not only looks pretty, it makes it easy to remove the chilli if you find the dish too hot.

## GREEN BEAN STIR FRY

serves 2

450g (1lb) green beans  
3 cloves garlic, finely sliced  
4 red chillies, split lengthwise  
3 tablespoons vegetarian oyster sauce  
2 large handfuls roasted cashews

1. Place a large fry pan or wok on a very high heat.
2. Remove stalks from beans but leave the pretty tails.
3. Add a few tablespoons macadamia or other neutral flavoured oil to the pan. Stir fry the beans keeping them moving around the pan for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add chilli and garlic and continue to stir fry until the beans are cooked to your liking. I prefer them to have a little crunch still.
5. Stir in sauce and cashews until everything is hot. Taste and season.

VIDEO

# GREEN BEAN STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

OK. Will keep in the fridge for a week or so but the cashews may soften a little. Not the end of the world though.

## variations for fun

**nut-free** – replace the cashews with torn bocconcini or fresh mozzarella.

**higher protein** – add in a can of drained cannellini beans or stir fry some tempeh or seitan and add that to the beans.

**carnivore** – skip the cashews and stir in some cooked shredded chicken at the end.

## problem solving guide

**can't find vegetarian oyster sauce?** – You may need to try a specialist Asian grocery store. Other wise hoi sin sauce makes a great alternative.

**bland or too dry** – you need more sauce!

**too salty** – sounds like an over dose of oyster sauce. Transfer the beans to a clean serving bowl leaving behind as much sauce as you can. Toss in the new bowl to rub some of the excess sauce onto the sides of the bowl.

**bitter** – when garlic burns, the flavour can become bitter and unpleasant. A little more sauce will dilute it. But next time add the garlic later in the cooking process.

**beans too crunchy** – next time cook for longer.

**beans burning** – if the beans are burning, make sure you keep them moving around the hot pan. The alternative is to reduce the heat so the beans cook more slowly.

## serving suggestions

Great as a simple meal on its own. Or serve as part of an Asian banquet with a veggie curry.

beef & broccoli stir fry





beef & broccoli stir fry

This is one of my all time favourite quick, healthy dinners.

# BEEF + BROCCOLI STIR FRY

serves 2-3

500g (1lb) ground (minced) beef  
2 cloves garlic, finely sliced  
2 heads broccoli  
4 tablespoons oyster sauce  
1 bunch coriander (cilantro), chopped

1. Preheat a large wok or frying pan on a very high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons peanut or other neutral flavoured oil and stir fry the beef.
3. While the beef is browning, finely slice the broccoli stems and chop the head into bite sized trees. Add garlic to the beef and continue to cook until well browned.
4. Add broccoli and a few tablespoons water and cover the pan.
5. Continue to cook on a high heat with the lid on, stirring every 2 minutes until the broccoli is bright green and tender but still a tiny bit crunchy. If it starts to burn, add a little more water.
6. Stir in oyster sauce. Taste and season and serve with chopped coriander on top.

VIDEO

# BEEF + BROCCOLI STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

Will keep in the fridge for a week or so. Reheats well and is also delicious at room temperature.

## variations for fun

**vegetarian / vegan** – replace the ground beef with crumbled firm tofu or 2 drained cans of lentils. It won't brown up as much as the beef but will still be lovely. And make sure you use a 'vegetarian' oyster sauce – they are available.

**no oyster sauce?** - Replace with hoisin sauce or even sweet soy sauce. Although to be honest – oyster sauce has the best flavour here – even the vegetarian oyster sauces taste delicious.

**chilli beef** - add in some fresh or dried chilli.

**ginger** - My irishman likes to add a few tablespoons of finely shredded fresh ginger in with the garlic.

**coriander-free** - Some people aren't keen on coriander (cilantro). If you're not sure, serve it on the side so everyone can add their own. Otherwise replace the coriander with fresh mint or parsley leaves.

**nutty** – a handful of roasted cashews adds a different dimension and some crunch. Especially good in the lentil vegetarian option.

## problem solving guide

**burning on the bottom** – it can be a bit tricky getting the broccoli to cook in such a dry environment. Remember to add a little water and cover the pan tightly as it cooks so the broccoli steams from the top.

**too salty** – oyster sauces vary in their saltiness levels. I find it rare that I need to add extra salt. For now, a little sugar can help tone down the saltiness but next time try a different brand of oyster sauce.

**too bland?** add in a little more salt and pepper. A dash of lime juice or lemon juice may also bring the flavours to life.

## serving suggestions

Great on its own. With the browned meat and veg it feels like a complete meal in a bowl.

You could serve with steamed rice or cauliflower rice if you prefer.

And it might also be nice to serve it with a curry and another stir fry as part of an Asian-ish banquet.



beef & black bean stir fry

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a beef and black bean stir fry. The dish consists of browned ground beef, dark green bok choy, and black beans. Two wooden chopsticks are placed diagonally across the bowl. In the background, a small glass bottle of dark soy sauce is visible on a light-colored wooden surface.

beef & black bean stir fry

Although black bean sauce is a classic, it wasn't until my Irishman cooked it for me that I really appreciated the beauty of the intensely salty beans.

# BEEF + BLACK BEAN STIR FRY

serves 2

450g (1lb) minced (ground) beef  
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
2 tablespoons dried black beans  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1-2 teaspoons chilli flakes  
1 bunch bok choy

1. Heat a large wok or fry pan on a high heat. Add a few tablespoons of oil and beef.
2. Stir fry beef for a few minutes. Chop garlic and add to the beef.
3. Meanwhile, combine black beans, soy sauce and 2 tablespoons water. Wash bok choy and roughly chop.
4. When the beef is well browned, add the sauce mix and stir fry for another minute.
5. Add bok choy and cook, covered, stirring occasionally for a few minutes or until bok choy is wilted. Taste & season.

VIDEO

# BEEF + BLACK BEAN STIR FRY...

## leftover potential?

Will keep in the fridge for a week or so.

## variations for fun

**carnivore** – try different cuts of beef or even chicken.

**vegan / vegetarian** – replace beef with crumbled firm tofu.

**different veg** – feel free to play around with different Asian greens or add in other vegetables. Sliced red capsicum (peppers), carrots, green onions, zucchini, broccoli are all good.

## problem solving guide

**black beans?** – replace with a commercial black bean sauce or skip all together and use a little more soy sauce.

**burning on the bottom** – the heat is probably too high, or you haven't been stirring often enough. Add a little water to slow things down and help the bok choy steam.

**bok choy too crunchy?** – sounds like you haven't cooked it for long enough. Next time cutting it finer may help. Adding a little water in to help the bok choy steam may also speed things up.

**too dry** – this is quite a dry stir fry which is relying on fat from the beef to keep things succulent. If your beef is very low fat the stir fry will be dry. Drizzle in some peanut oil or other neutral flavoured oil to soften things up. A little water may help too.

**too salty?** – both the black beans and the soy are going to add a bit hit of salty goodness. So be careful before you season with anything else.

**too bland?** don't forget to season. A little more soy may liven things up.

## serving suggestions

Great as a meal on it's own. Or you could serve as part of an Asian banquet with another stir fry, some rice or cauliflower rice, and maybe a curry or two.




*healthy*

# THAI MAIN COURSES



steamed fish with *ginger &* soy



steamed fish with *ginger & soy*

It doesn't get much healthier than steamed fish. I love the clean simple flavours of this dish.

# STEAMED FISH WITH GINGER + SOY

serves 2

*golf ball sized hunk of ginger*  
*2 white fish fillets*  
*4 tablespoons soy sauce*  
*2 small red chillies, finely sliced*  
*lime halves, to serve*  
*coriander (cilantro) leaves, to serve*

1. Heat about 2cm (1in) water in a large pot. Finely slice ginger. Chop some into matchsticks so you have about 1 tablespoon of matchsticks. Leave the remainder as slices.
2. Place the ginger slices (save the matchsticks for later) in the base of a steamer or strainer. Place fish on top of ginger. Making sure the 2 fish fillets aren't touching.
3. Pop the steamer / strainer on top of the boiling water. Cover with a lid and steam for 4-6 minutes or until the fish is cooked and flakes when touched with your finger.
4. Meanwhile, combine soy, chilli and ginger matchsticks in a small bowl.
5. When the fish is cooked transfer to 2 plates and pour over the soy & ginger dressing. Serve with lime and coriander.

VIDEO

# STEAMED FISH WITH GINGER + SOY...

## leftover potential?

Will keep in the fridge for a few days. Be careful when reheating not to overcook the fish.

## variations for fun

**soy-free** – replace the soy sauce with 2 tablespoons each fish sauce and lime juice.

**no steamer?** – just pan fry the fish in a little oil and serve with the dressing.

**steamed chicken** – replace the fish fillets with chicken breasts or thigh fillets. Best to chop the chicken breasts in half lengthwise so they cook more quickly. Will take more in the 10-15 minute time frame. Make sure the chicken is totally cooked through.

**vegetarian / vegan** – try steamed eggplant. Replace the fish with a medium eggplant sliced crosswise into rounds about 1cm (1/2in) thick until the eggplant is super soft and silky. Steamed tofu will also work.

## problem solving guide

**too salty** – if the soy is too intense, water it down with a splash of water or a little lime juice.

**fish tough / rubbery / mushy** – all signs of overcooked fish. Next time check earlier in the steaming process.

**fish not cooking on the bottom** – the ginger can block the steam to the fish so you might like to move the ginger out of the way or turn the fish over about half way.

## serving suggestions

Lovely as a super healthy meal on its own. Or serve as part of a Thai banquet.

thai fish cakes





thai fish cakes

Thai fish cakes are often served as a starter or appetizer in Thai restaurants. I love them so much I prefer to make a whole meal out of them. Any white fish fillets are good here, although my all-time favourite is flathead.

# THAI FISH CAKES

serves 2 as a main / 4 as a starter

400g (14oz) white fish fillets  
1 tablespoons red curry paste  
2 kaffir lime leaves, finely sliced with scissors, or  
lime zest  
lime wedges, to serve

1. Finely chop the fish and stir in the curry paste and lime leaves / zest.
2. Using a tablespoon, form into balls about the size of a golf ball. Pat down to form more of a burger shape so the fish cakes cook more quickly!
3. Heat a thin layer of oil in a large frying pan over a medium high heat.
4. Fry for about 2 minutes on the first side or until you can see the fish around the sides starting to look 'cooked'.
5. Carefully turn and cook for another minute, or until the fishcakes are just cooked through. Serve with lime wedges.

VIDEO

# THAI FISH CAKES...

## leftover potential?

OK. Will keep in the fridge for a few days. Can be lovely cold. Be careful when reheating as it's easy to over cook the fish.

## variations for fun

**budget** – replace half the fish with soft bread crumbs of a drained mashed can of cannellini beans or chickpeas.

**vegetarian** – make 'Thai' zucchini burgers by adding 1-2 tablespoons curry paste to this recipe and serving with lime wedges instead of the yoghurt.

**vegan** – you could try replacing the fish with drained mashed cannellini beans or butter beans but they may fall apart.

**chicken cakes** – replace the fish with ground or minced chicken..

## problem solving guide

**burning** – reduce the heat or cook for less time.

**sticking to the pan** – use more oil and try a slightly higher heat. Make sure the oil is hot before adding the fish cakes.

**fish cakes falling apart** – 3 things to watch out for:

1. Make sure you chop the fish finely so that it will bind together. Larger chunks will have difficulty.
2. Be firm when forming the fishcakes – we're relying on the pressure to keep them together.
3. Don't turn too early. We need the protein to cook and set to help bind the fishcakes together. Turning before this happens will allow them to crumble.

**bland** - season fish cakes or serve with a sauce like a sweet chilli sauce. Next time try more curry paste or a different brand.

## serving suggestions

Lovely on their own with a green salad. Or serve as a starter either with the lime or with some sweet chilli sauce for dipping. Also good with lime mayo (just stir lime zest and a little lime juice into your favourite mayonnaise).

pork satay





pork satay

Peanut butter fans will love this spicy peanut based sauce. While it's brilliant with pork or chicken skewers, it's also delicious slathered over grilled or roast veggies. And makes a surprisingly good accompaniment to seafood.

## PORK SATAY

serves 2

2 pork fillets

3 tablespoons soy sauce

1/4 cup peanut butter

1-2 teaspoons red curry paste

fresh coriander (cilantro), to serve

1. Cut pork into bite sized cubes and place in a small bowl with 2 tablespoons soy sauce.
2. Place a skillet or frying pan on a high heat.
3. Combine peanut butter, curry paste, 1 tablespoon soy sauce and 2 tablespoons oil. Taste and add more curry paste if you need more.
4. Thread pork onto 4 bamboo skewers.
5. Add a little oil to the pan and cook pork for 3 minutes on the first side. Turn then cook for another 2-3 minutes or until just cooked. I prefer to leave it slightly pink in the middle to avoid drying out.
5. Serve skewers with satay sauce drizzled over and coriander leaves.

VIDEO

# PORK SATAY...

leftover potential?

Will keep for over a week in the fridge.

variations for fun

**chicken or beef** – replace the pork with chicken breasts or beef fillet.

**vegetarian / vegan** – try tofu skewers instead of the pork. And make sure your curry paste doesn't contain fish sauce. You can also add some veg to the skewers such as red peppers (capsicum), mushrooms or zucchini.

**can't find curry paste?** – replace it with some freshly chopped red chillies and add a little more oil to the satay sauce.

**budget** – use a cheaper cut of meat such as pork neck or pork shoulder but be careful not to overcook to avoid tough meat. OR replace half the meat with vegetables such as red peppers (capsicum), mushrooms or zucchini.

problem solving guide

**pork dry** - it's important not to overcook the pork as it easily dries out. Best to err on the side of slightly undercooked.

**too salty** – if your satay sauce is too salty or too hot, balance the flavour out with a little brown sugar.

**sauce too stiff** – stir in a little more oil or a splash of water to make for a more fluid sauce.

**bland** – add a little more soy or curry paste to boost the flavour of the satay sauce.

**short on time?** – skip the threading onto the skewers and just stir fry the cubes or pork until just cooked and serve drizzled with the peanut sauce.

serving suggestions

Serve with some of the sauce drizzled over and extra sauce on the side. Good with a green salad as well as the coriander (cilantro).



*healthy*

ACCOMPANIMENTS

perfect *steamed* rice





perfect *steamed* rice

If you've ever struggled with gluggy rice, I feel your pain. The good news is there's an easy solution!

Basmati rice is best with Indian style dishes whereas Thai works best with jasmine rice. Although it won't be the end of the world if you mix them up.

## PERFECT FLUFFY STEAMED RICE

serves 2-3

250g (9oz) basmati or jasmine rice

1. Bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil.
2. Add rice and boil for exactly 10 minutes (set your timer).
3. Drain rice well then keep the colander or strainer for the excess steam to evaporate until you're ready to serve. Too easy.

VIDEO

# PERFECT FLUFFY STEAMED RICE...

## leftover potential?

I find rice is best when it's first cooked. Although if you must reheat either use the microwave or pan fry the rice in a tiny amount of peanut oil.

## variations for fun

**for fried rice to serve with curry** – cook rice as above then allow to cool on a tray. Heat a few tablespoons peanut oil in a frying pan and cook a couple of beaten eggs for 15 seconds or so. Add cooled rice and keep stir-frying until the rice is hot and the egg is cooked. Season with one or two tablespoons soy sauce.

## problem solving guide

**gluggy** – either the rice you've used was poor quality, or it's overcooked. Next time try another brand and be sure and only cook for 10 minutes.

**dry & hard centred** – If the rice has lots of chalky stuff in the middle it could have been cooked a little longer. although I like my rice to have a little bite to it like a good al dente pasta so you may be surprised that it will taste fine.

**need cold rice in a hurry?** – If you're planning on making fried rice, don't make the mistake of trying to cool it down more quickly by running cold water over it. The cold water won't evaporate and you'll end up with very soggy rice. The best method is to spread it out on the biggest tray you have and fan it enthusiastically.

**can't find basmati rice?** – Basmati rice tends to have the most lovely flavour but jasmie rice can be used for thai dishes. Or just plain long grain rice will work as well. Just don't try and use arborio rice or short grain rice – it won't end up fluffy.

## serving suggestions

Serve with pretty much any and every dish in the class!

steamed greens



steamed greens

Steamed greens are a brilliant side to have in your repertoire. Just as versatile as a classic green salad and perfect for the cooler months when you're looking for something more warming.

## STEAMED GREENS

per person

1/2 bunch greens

1-2 tablespoons sauce

splash of oil, optional

1. Bring 2cm (1in) water to the boil in a large pot. Trim greens and chop into bright sized pieces.
2. Place a strainer or colander in the saucepan making sure the base isn't touching the water. Add greens and cover with a lid.
3. Simmer for 5-10 minutes or until greens are bright green and tender.
4. Transfer to a serving plate and drizzle over the sauce and oil, if using.

VIDEO

# STEAMED GREENS...

## leftover potential?

OK but nicer when super fresh.

## variations for fun

**greens** – all Asian greens such as bok choy, pak choy, Chinese broccoli, asparagus, sugar snap peas, snow peas, spinach, kale, cavolo nero, broccoli, broccolini, warrigal greens.

**sauce** – oyster sauce, lemon juice, lime juice, soy sauce, hoisin sauce, sherry vinegar, .

**oil** – for an Asian vibe try sesame oil, peanut oil or macadamia oil. For a more mediterranean feel try a peppery extra virgin olive oil.

**more substantial** – serve with some protein in the form of cooked lentils or beans, chickpeas, poached or boiled eggs, cooked chicken or fish, cheese such as parmesan, ricotta or goats cheese, or nuts.

**don't have anything you can steam in?** – then just simmer the greens in boiling salted water until tender (about 5 minutes) drain and drizzle with sauce. Technically, then they're 'boiled greens' but it can be our little secret.

## problem solving guide

**greens too crunchy** – next time slice the veg finer or chop them into smaller ribbons. Also, make sure you're not pushing down too hard on the veg if you're using a mandoline. It took me a while to discover that the less pressure you apply the finer your shaved veg.

**greens brown and lifeless** – either your greens weren't very fresh to begin with, or you've overcooked them. Next time check them earlier in the cooking process.

**too dry** – be more generous with the sauce and oil.


**too bland** – season with a little more sauce or get busy with the salt & pepper.

## serving suggestions

Great as a side pretty much anywhere you feel like having some more veg.

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with cauliflower rice. The bowl is placed on a rustic wooden table with a red and brown distressed finish. The cauliflower rice is finely shredded and piled in the center of the bowl. The text "cauliflower rice" is overlaid in a light gray, monospaced font in the upper right quadrant of the bowl.

cauliflower rice



cauliflower rice

I can't remember the last time I cooked steamed rice. in our house these days it's cauli rice all the way. And the good news is it takes a fraction of the time it normally takes to boil rice.

# CAULIFLOWER 'RICE'

serves 2

1/2 cauliflower

1 tablespoon oil, optional

1. Remove leaves and tough stems from the cauliflower.
2. Grate or shred the cauli using a food processor or a cheese grater.
3. Either serve immediately or stir in oil to protect the cauliflower from oxidising and losing some of its vitamins.

VIDEO

# CAULIFLOWER 'RICE' ...

## leftover potential?

Will keep in the fridge for a week or so but the vitamin content won't be as high as when freshly grated.

## variations for fun

**fried 'rice'** - heat a few tablespoons peanut oil or other neutral flavoured oil in a wok or large frying pan. Stir fry the grated cauliflower for a few minutes or until golden brown.

**chilli 'rice'** - Toss in some finely chopped chilli.

## problem solving guide

**no grater or food processor?** - No dramas. Just finely chop the cauliflower with your sharpest knife until you have rice shaped pieces.

**cauliflower flavour too strong** - if the grated cauliflower is exposed to the air for a long time, the flavour tends to become more pungent. To avoid this in the future, toss the freshly grated cauliflower with some neutral flavoured oil.

**too bland?** season with a little salt & pepper.

## serving suggestions

Pretty much works anywhere you'd serve steamed rice.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



The author of this e-cookbook is Jules Clancy.

I'm a qualified Food Scientist, and the creator of the simple food blog [Stonesoup](#) and the [Stonesoup Virtual Cookery School](#).

I've been writing my blog since 2005 because I believe that the ability to cook simple, healthy, delicious food is a basic skill, like reading, that everyone should and can have.

When I'm not cooking, writing about food or taking photographs [of food], I can be found indulging my passions for long boozy lunches, travel, running, cookbooks, growing my own veggies, cheese, red shoes and Irishmen, [OK one Irishman in particular].

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